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OPEN SPACE ELEMENT
OF THE
REVISED GENERAL PLAN


CITY OF CULVER CITY
CALIFORNIA

1973

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I. INTRODUCTION

A. STATE LAW PROVISIONS

Section 65302 (e) of the Government Code of the State of California requires a General Plan to include:

" An open-space element as provided in Article 10, 5 (commencing with Section 65560 of this Chapter). "

Section 65560, as added by Chapter 251 of the Statutes of the 1972 Legislative Session, provides as follows:

"(a) ' Local open-space plan' is the open space element of a county or city general plan adopted by the board or council, either as the local open-space plan or as the interim local open-space plan pursuant to Section 65563.

(b) ' Open-space land' is any parcel or area of land or water which is essentially unimproved and devoted to an open-space use as defined in this section, and which is designated on a local, regional or state open-space plan as any of the following:

(1) Open space for the preservation of natural resources including, but not limited to, areas required for the preservation of plant and animal life, including habitat for fish and wildlife species; areas required for ecological and other scientific study purposes; rivers, streams, bays and estuaries; and coastal beaches, lakeshores, banks of rivers and streams, and watershed lands.

(2) Open space used for the managed production of resources, including but not limited to, forest lands, rangeland, agricultural lands and areas of economic importance for the production of food or fiber; areas required for recharge of ground water basins; bays, estuaries, marshes, rivers and streams which are important for the management of commercial fisheries; and areas containing major mineral deposits, including those in short supply.

(3) Open space for outdoor recreation, including but not limited to, areas of outstanding scenic, historic and cultural value; areas particularly suited for park and recreational purposes, including access to lakeshores, beaches, and rivers and streams; and areas which serve as links between major recreation and open-space reservations, including utility easements, banks of rivers and streams, trails, and scenic highway corridors.

(4) Open space for public health and safety, including but not limited to, areas which require special management or regulation because of hazardous or special conditions such as earthquake fault zones, unstable soil areas, flood plains, watersheds, areas presenting high fire risks, areas required for the protection of water quality and water reservoirs and areas required for the protection and enhancement of air quality. "

Section 65561, as added by Chapter 1590 of the Statutes of the 1970 Legislative Session, provides as follows:

" The Legislature finds and declares as follows:

- (a) That the preservation of open-space land, as defined in this article, is necessary not only for the maintenance of the economy of the state, but also for the assurance of the continued availability of land for the production of food and fiber, for the enjoyment of scenic beauty, for recreation and for the use of natural resources.
- (b) That discouraging premature and unnecessary conversion of open-space land to urban uses is a matter of public interest and will be of benefit to urban dwellers because it will discourage non-contiguous development patterns which unnecessarily increase the costs of community services to community residents.
- (c) That the anticipated increase in the population of the state demands that cities, counties, and the state at the earliest possible date make definite plans for the preservation of valuable open-space land and take positive action to carry out such plans by the adoption and strict administration of laws, rules and regulations as authorized by this chapter or by other appropriate methods.
- (d) That in order to assure that the interests of all its people are met in the orderly growth and development of the state and the preservation and conservation of its resources, it is necessary to provide for the development by the state, regional agencies, counties and cities, including charter cities, of statewide coordinated plans for the conservation and preservation of open-space lands.
- (e) That for these reasons this article is necessary for the promotion of the general welfare and for the protection of the public interest in open-space land."

Section 65562, as added by Chapter 1590 of the Statutes of the 1970 Legislative Session, provides as follows:

" It is the intent of the Legislature in enacting this article:

- (a) To assure that cities and counties recognize that open space land is a limited and valuable resource which must be conserved wherever possible.
- (b) To assure that every city and county will prepare and carry out open-space plans which, along with state and regional open-space plans, will accomplish the objectives of a comprehensive open space program."

Section 65563, as amended by Chapter 2 of the Statutes of the 1971 First Extraordinary Legislative Session, provides as follows:

" On or before June 30, 1973, every city and county shall prepare, adopt and submit to the Secretary of the Resources Agency a local open-space plan for the comprehensive and long-range preservation and conservation of open-space land within its jurisdiction ... (omission here relates to interim open-space plan). "

Section 65564, as added by Chapter 1590 of the Statutes of the 1970 Legislative Session, provides as follows:

" Every local open-space plan shall contain an action program consisting of specific programs which the legislative body intends to pursue in implementing its open-space plan. "

Section 65565 is blank for the present time.

Section 65566, as added by Chapter 1590 of the Statutes of the 1970 Legislative Session, provides as follows:

" Any action by a county or city by which open-space land or any interest therein is acquired or disposed of or its use restricted or regulated, whether or not pursuant to this part, must be consistent with the local open-space plan. "

Section 65567, as added by Chapter 1590 of the Statutes of the 1970 Legislative Session, provides as follows:

" No building permit may be issued, no subdivision map approved, and no open-space zoning ordinance adopted, unless the proposed construction, subdivision or ordinance is consistent with the local open-space plan. "

Section 65568, as added by Chapter 1590 of the Statutes of the 1970 Legislative Session, provides as follows:

" If any provision of this article or the application thereof to any person is held invalid, the remainder of this article and the application of such provision to other persons shall not be affected thereby. "

Section 65700, as amended by Chapter 251 of the Statutes of the 1972 Legislative Session, provides as follows:

" The provisions of this chapter shall not apply to a charter city, except to the extent that the same may be adopted by charter or ordinance of the city; except that charter cities shall adopt general plans in any case, and such plans shall be adopted by resolution of the legislative body of the city, or the planning commission if the charter so provides, and such plans shall contain the mandatory elements required by Article 5 (commencing with Section 65300) of Chapter 3 of this title. "

Section 65910, as amended by Chapter 251 of the Statutes of the 1972 Legislative Session, provides as follows:

" Every city and county by June 30, 1973, shall prepare and adopt an open-space zoning ordinance consistent with the local open-space plan adopted pursuant to Article 10.5 (commencing with Section 65560) of Chapter 3 of this title. "

B. ANALYSIS OF STATE LAW PROVISIONS

Culver City is a charter city by virtue of the Charter adopted by the City, approved by the State and filed with the Secretary of State on January 21, 1947. Therefore, the literal interpretation of the State Law sections just cited relative to Culver City indicates, as a result of Section 65700, that only Section 65302 (e) is applicable in terms of open space plans. However, in order to comply with the intent of the Legislature in the preparation and implementation of an open space plan, this Element as far as possible utilizes Sections 65560 through 65568 as guidelines. In this manner the degree of home rule possessed by Culver City as a charter city remains intact, and the City's Open Space Element will still be able to provide a rational basis for local decision-making.

Finally, although this Element proposes as one of several implementation tools the adoption of an open space zoning ordinance, this proposal is included as a voluntary act by the City since Section 65910 of the Government Code, by virtue of Section 65700, is not applicable to Culver City.

C. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER GENERAL PLAN ELEMENTS

The Open Space Element is one of a series of elements which, when combined with statements of development policies, objectives, principles, standards and proposals, comprise the General Plan. Culver City's Revised General Plan, including the Land Use, Circulation, Housing and Conservation Elements, was adopted on March 26, 1973 by Resolution No. CS-6851 of the City Council. The City's Recreation Element was adopted on February 13, 1968 by Resolution No. CS-6034 of the City Council. The Recreation Element is presently being reviewed in light of the increased need for leisure-time areas and facilities, and amendments to the Element will be scheduled for public hearings following the adoption of the Open Space Element. Other adopted General Plan elements will be reviewed annually by the Planning Commission to assure continued viability as planning guidelines.

Areas classified within this Open Space Element as "open space" are also included in several of the other General Plan elements under other classifications. In the Recreation Element the "open space" areas shown are classified as parks. In the Conservation Element the "open space" areas are also indicated as areas for conservation. In the Land Use Element the "open space" areas are shown on the text and in maps as parks, open spaces, and buffers. Additionally, areas exist within this Open Space Element which are classified herein as "open space" which are not so indicated on other elements of the General Plan. In these cases, the "open space" classifications in this Element prevail for the purpose of land use regulation.

D. RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER JURISDICTIONS

The City of Culver City contains a total gross area of 4.8 square miles (3100 acres) and an exceedingly irregular boundary which alternately abuts the City of Los Angeles and the County of Los Angeles. The age of the City (56 years) compared with the relative newness of most cities in Los Angeles County, the location of the City within a sea of Los Angeles City and County, and the irregular boundaries combine to increase on adjacent areas the influence of the City. As such, the Planning Area of the City (Section 65600 of the Government Code) encompasses certain areas which abut the City but which are located within the City of Los Angeles and the County of Los Angeles. The Culver City General Plan and previously adopted elements coordinate with the jurisdictions involved to permit the Plan and elements to extend beyond the Culver City boundaries to the limits of the City's planning area. This Open Space Element also extends to the same planning area limits. As far as possible extraterritorial planning has been coordinated with the City of Los Angeles and the County of Los Angeles.

The basis for coordination of this Element with the policies of the larger region is the Environmental Development Guide of the County of Los Angeles, adopted by the County in 1970. Adoption of Open Space Elements by the City of Los Angeles and the County of Los Angeles may require, to achieve a more coordinated approach, amendments to Culver City's Open Space Element. These amendments will be submitted for public hearing consideration in accordance with applicable procedures.

E. COMPLIANCE WITH THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

This Element has been prepared and scheduled for review and adoption in accordance with the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act of 1970 as amended, the State Guidelines relating thereto, and the Culver City Guidelines for the implementation of the Act. Documentation of compliance with the Act has been prepared and filed separately and will be considered as part of the public hearings on this Element.

II. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES; CRITERIA AND DEFINITIONS

A. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE CITY IN THE PRESERVATION OF OPEN SPACE

Based on a series of "Goals Questionnaires" completed by a broad sample of community residents and businessmen at the end of the last decade, and the degree of support from the community for many recent innovative regulations adopted by the City Council, a major goal of the community can be best expressed as a desire to preserve those facets of the environment which remain at livable levels and improve in general the environmental quality of life. This goal, which is undoubtedly shared by most, if not all, other communities, translates into a series of objectives for Culver City. The series includes:

1. Preserve and improve existing park and recreation facilities.
2. Create additional park and recreational facilities, including bikeways.
3. Reduce permitted residential densities.
4. Require additional open space on new developments.
5. Improve public transportation.
6. Adopt and enforce more stringent property maintenance standards.
7. Improve public rights-of-way facilities in certain areas.
8. Create separations between incompatible land uses.
9. Increase cultural awareness and opportunity.
10. Underground utility lines.
11. Landscape medians in public rights-of-way.
12. Landscape railroad rights-of-way.

Certain of these objectives bear an indirect, rather than a direct, relationship to open space. For example, an improved public transportation system will provide a direct benefit to persons who lack other means of mobility, and at the same time will provide the potential for direct benefit to the community as a whole by a potential reduction in exhaust emissions through the use of fewer vehicles. The indirect relationship between this objective and open space will come if the objective is realized and utilized so that, over a period of time the need for parking areas will decrease and as a result the potential amount of land area which can be devoted to open space uses will increase.

The following chart summarizes the direct relationships between the objectives contained above and the results in terms of open space which will be accomplished through the pursuit of these objectives.

OBJECTIVE	ACCOMPLISHES
1. Preserve and improve existing park and recreation facilities	1. Maintain existing open space areas which are properly located for recreation purposes
2. Create additional park and recreation facilities, including bikeways	2. Create new open space areas; use vacant lands for recreation purposes; use land for recreation purposes in conjunction with other compatible uses
3. Reduce permitted residential densities	3. Reduce rate of population growth in the City thereby reducing the population impact on existing recreation facilities
4. Require additional open space on new developments	4. Provide open spaces in closer proximity to living quarters and thereby improve living environment
5. Create separations between incompatible uses	5. Use landscaped buffers to create separations and at the same time increase the amount of open space in needed areas
6. Increase cultural awareness and opportunity	6. Provide multiple-use areas including open space use
7. Underground utility lines	7. Permit increased use of utility easement surface areas for open space
8. Landscape medians in public rights-of-way	8. Increase the amount of vegetation
9. Landscape railroad rights-of-way	9. Create additional usable open space areas

Since the goals questionnaires, which formed the basis of the objectives contained herein, were conducted in excess of five years ago, several important actions to implement these goals have been undertaken by the City Council. These recent actions include:

1. A 50% reduction in the permitted density in multiple-family areas during the past five years.
2. An increase in the amount of private open space required for new developments by making the open space requirements applicable to an increasing number of lots
3. Adoption of requirements for park land dedication or fees in lieu thereof in conjunction with subdivision approval
4. Commencement of undergrounding districts concurrent with requirements for undergrounding with all new developments and subdivisions
5. Commencement of landscaping public rights-of-way medians in conjunction with street widening projects

B. CRITERIA AND DEFINITIONS

The scarcity of undeveloped and underdeveloped land within the City is so great that the tendency exists to classify every available parcel in this condition as open space. The value of open space is the result which will be achieved by the classification of land in this manner, not the classification merely to increase the aggregate quantity of open space. Section 65560 (b) of the Government Code sets forth the following four basic purposes of open space:

1. Open space for the preservation of natural resources
2. Open space for the managed production of resources
3. Open space for outdoor recreation
4. Open space for public health and safety

These four purposes, or results which will be achieved by the classification of property as open space, become the criteria for the classification of properties in Section III of this Element.

In order to provide the reader with certain background information on Culver City, and as a result assist him in understanding the terms used in this Element, the following discussion of terms relating to the City is provided.

Baldwin Hills:

The term Baldwin Hills , as used in the context of this Element and in the context of other elements of the Culver City General Plan, describes that land area of approximately 420 acres located west of La Cienega Boulevard, north of the Holy Cross Cemetery, east of the West Los Angeles College and Culver City Boundary line, and south of the developed areas of the County Island and Blair Hills. The land area involved is presently developed with oil wells, is privately owned, and is located partially in the City of Culver City and partially in the County of Los Angeles. The area within this mass in Culver City is zoned for single-family development, and in the County for uses permitted in the agricultural zones. The area is included within the City's adopted Conservation Element and is also included on the appropriate open space plans of the Los Angeles County Environmental Development Guide (adopted in 1970).

Bikeway:

The term designates existing and proposed bikeways in the City, as they are set forth in the 1972 amendment to the City's Recreation Element. Specifically, the bikeways include the surface street pattern adopted by the City and in existence at the present time, the 0.9 mile bikeway along the westerly side of Ballona Creek channel from Overland Avenue to Sepulveda Boulevard, and the proposed 3.5 mile bikeway along the same side of the Creek channel extending from Mc Manus Park to the City boundary west of the San Diego Freeway.

Buffer:

This term is the designation in the Land Use Element of the General Plan for those strips of land in the City intended to be developed with landscaping to serve as separations between industrial and residential uses. The areas of the City involved are Lucerne-Higuera and Mc Manus Park. Both the industrial and residential uses in each of these areas have existed in close proximity for many years. The buffer concept is intended to provide a physical separation between the existing uses and at the same time increase in those areas the amount of open space. Land areas which will become buffers are in some cases privately owned and in some cases owned by the City and vacant.

County Island:

This term as used in the community relates to a 91 acre area of land lying within unincorporated Los Angeles County and surrounded on all sides by the City of Culver City. The area is accessible by means of two private roads and is developed with approximately 10 single-family homes and a number of oil wells. The Island is included within the City's planning area and is within the Culver City Unified School District.

Creek:

As used in this Element and in other elements of Culver City's General Plan, the Creek refers to the Ballona Creek Flood Control Channel, which traverses the City along a 4 mile course and is operated jointly by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Los Angeles County Flood Control District. Fee title ownership is divided in different sections of the Creek between the Corps, the District and private property owners. The entire Creek area is covered with easements for drainage purposes.

Fault Zone:

Three earthquake faults traverse the City. The Overland Fault and the Charnock Fault are each classified as inactive by geologists involved in earthquake mapping. Therefore, the term "Fault Zone" is not intended to be applicable to either of these two faults in this Element. The third fault system which traverses a small part of the eastern section of the City known as Blair Hills, as well as a major part of the Baldwin Hills, is called the Inglewood-Newport Fault. Fault Zone in this Element refers to a strip of land 250' in width parallel to and measured from the centerline in each direction of each mapped trace of the Inglewood-Newport fault system.

Greenbelt:

This is the term used in the 1972 amendment to the Recreation Element to describe the proposal to landscape the shoulders of the Creek as well as the surplus strips of land within the railroad rights-of-way in the City.

Parks:

Unless otherwise modified the term parks refers to existing or proposed public parks. Existing public parks within the City, by name, are: Culver West, Veterans Memorial, Carlson, Culver, Blanco, Lindberg, Mc Manus and Blair Hills.

Private Open Space:

Culver City requires various types of private open space in connection with developments. The term as it is used in this Element relates only to private open space required as a condition of subdivision approval and permanently guaranteed to remain as such through recorded covenants and/or restrictions on the land areas involved. These areas are in each case privately owned and maintained. Future private open space areas which may be required as conditions of approval on future subdivisions, and guaranteed in the same manner, are also included.

Railroad Rights-of-Way:

Three railroad lines traverse the City. Along each of these lines properties exist in excess of the amounts required for clear space along the tracks (the minimum requirement for clear space is 12.5 feet from the centerline of the track along each side of the track). Additionally, several private railroad spur lines exist, as well as a strip of property owned by the railroad but not connected in any way with an existing railroad line. Throughout this Element where proposals to improve railroad rights-of-way are made, the improvements are not intended to violate the clear space requirements.

Ron Smith Field:

This is the designation given the private 10 acre field on which Little League baseball is played. The site is located within the County Island and used for Little League through an informal arrangement with the property owner.

Tellefson Park:

This is the name of a proposed new public park in the City on property owned by the State Division of Highways. The property ownership will not change with the improvement of the land area for park use. The site is located along the southwesterly side of Slauson Avenue within the northwest quadrant of the Route 90-Route 405 interchange.

III. OPEN SPACE WITHIN THE CULVER CITY PLANNING AREA

Although in each case in this section the land areas designated "open space" will serve the purposes contained in Section 65560 (b) of the Government Code, several types of areas in this section of the Element will serve multiple rather than single purposes. Therefore, in order to avoid the duplication which would result from listing the areas by the purposes served, the areas of open space in this section are categorized according to present use of the areas. Included within each description is the purpose (s) which will be served by designation of the area as open space.

A. EXISTING AND PROPOSED PUBLIC PARK FACILITIES

1. EXISTING PUBLIC PARKS

The list below identifies those areas within the City which at the present time are developed and used as public parks. In each case the land area involved is owned by the City. Although two of the areas (Maxella Parkette and Coombs Park) are each in reality large landscaped traffic islands, each of these areas is used as passive park areas by residents of the surrounding neighborhood.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>LEGAL DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>AREA</u>
Mc Manus Park	Portion of Lot 29, Subdivision of the Southern Portion of Rancho Rincon de los Bueyes (MR 53-25) plus Lots 90, 148-151, 204-209, and 260 of Tract 5560 (MR 59-19)	5.87 acres
Maxella Parkette	Lot 73 of Tract 7135 (MB 88-89)	0.05 acres
Lindberg Park	Portion of Andres Machado 86.66 acre allot. of the Rancho La Ballona (D.C.C. 2000) plus Lots A, 215 - 226 of Tract 10123 (MB 141-15-17)	4.39 acres
Coombs Park	Lot A of Tract 9930 (MB 138-97-98)	0.49 acres
El Marino Park	Lots 14 and 15 of Tract 17352 (MB 426-31-32)	1.60 acres
Blanco Park	Portion of Lot 1 of Tract 16912 (MB 392-14-17)	1.46 acres
Carlson Park	Lot A of Tract 10078 (MB 141-23-25)	2.66 acres
Culver West Park	Lots 257-264 of Tract 7147 (MB 80-36) plus Lots 20-23 of Tract 5740 (MB 66- 11)	2.51 acres
Blair Hills Park	Portion of Lot 16, Rancho Rincon (supra) plus Lots 2-6 of Tract 22611 (MB 623-84-86)	1.62 acres
Veterans Memorial	Lots 1-100 of Tract 9931 (MB 138-99-100)	10.95 acres
Washington - National Rest Area	Portion of Lot 22, Subdivision of the Southern Portion of Rancho Rincon de Los Bueyes.	0.10 acres

Each of the facilities just listed serves the purpose of open space for outdoor recreation due to suitability of location of the facility with respect to the service needs of the community. As can be seen from the present size of certain of these parks, expansion of the park lands is needed to meet the acceptable minimum sizes for neighborhood parks (4.0 acres in Culver City) as set forth in the Recreation Element. Expansion areas are listed in the section on proposed public parks.

2. PROPOSED PUBLIC PARKS

This section covers the "expansion areas" for existing public parks as well as several proposed public parks within the City. In both cases, until the decision to acquire property is made with respect to a specific piece of property, the exact location of the property is not known. Additionally, in most cases the expansion or new facility involves utilization for open space purposes land areas presently developed with structures. Specific identification of these land areas, therefore, would not serve any purpose of preservation of existing open space.

a. EXPANSION OF EXISTING PUBLIC PARKS

Page 8 of Culver City's Recreation Element summarizes the proposed expansion of existing neighborhood park facilities in order that these facilities presently deficient in area meet the adopted standards. The expansion program is listed below.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>PRESENT ACREAGE</u>	<u>DESIRABLE ACREAGE</u>
Culver West	2.51 acres	4.00 acres
Blanco	1.46 acres	4.00 acres
Blair Hills	1.62 acres	4.00 acres

Expansion is not proposed for either El Marino Park (presently 1.60 acres) or Carlson Park (presently 2.66 acres), since the residential population served by each of these facilities is of limited growth potential.

The expansion of Culver West Park has been carried within the City's Capital Improvement Program for several years, and is intended by the City to be accomplished, along with certain public street improvements in the area, within the next two years. Expansion of Blanco Park will necessitate the relocation of the existing park to an expandable site or the provision, for the neighborhood, of the "expansion area" in a manner detached from the present park site. Expansion of Blair Hills Park will involve utilization of land area within the County Island.

b. PROPOSED PUBLIC PARKS

Fox Hills Park

In accordance with the standards in the Recreation Element of the City, the area of the City known as Fox Hills requires a 10.00 acre public park to serve the recreation needs of the residents. Population in the area at the present time is approximately 5000 persons. Development of the remainder of the area in accordance with existing agreements between the property owner and the City's Redevelopment Agency will result in

a doubling of this population figure within the next decade. Additionally, the area at the present time is undergoing a transition from a "total" apartment community to a community containing a mixture of rental apartment units and condominium apartment units. Through the processing of these applications to convert the rental apartment units to condominium units, as well as future development applications in the area, the City, through its locally-adopted Quimby Act provisions, collects fees in lieu of park land which would otherwise be dedicated. These fees, which are being placed in a Fox Hills Park Fund, will be used by the City to acquire the required amount of park land in the area. The park land required may be acquired as one or more than one site, dependent upon the price and availability of land area.

Lucerne-Higuera Park

This area is called "Van Buren Park" in the Recreation Element. The proposed park, which bears the name of the residential neighborhood to be served, is programed to be a total of 4.00 acres and to be located within the vicinity of the intersection of Lucerne Avenue and Higuera Street.

Implementation of this proposed park is intended to be a combination of fulfillment of subdivision park requirements by developers in the area and City participation.

Clarkdale Park

The Clarkdale area of the City is presently devoid of park land for the residents. With one exception all properties within the area are presently developed with structures and used for purposes other than open space. Acquisition of the required 4.00 acres of land for a park in this area will require capital improvement budgeting, use of revenue sharing funds, or use of federal or state grant monies.

Tellefson Park

Located in the western section of Sunkist Park residential area of the City, this proposed public park is in the process of development. Usable acreage of the park is 2.1 acres. The site is located along Slauson Avenue within the northwest quadrangle of the Route 90-Route 405 interchange. Upon development of the land area for park purposes, this site will represent the completion of the first Maler-Johnson Park Act agreement between the State Division of Highways and a city in the State. The park is designed to meet the needs of handicapped as well as non-handicapped children, and will provide areas for passive use. The land ownership will remain with the State and is covered by a lease agreement between the City and the State for park use. Improvement costs are being shared between the City and the State. It is anticipated that the park will be developed and operational by 1974.

In each case in this section the provision of open space through the expansion of existing public parks or the acquisition of new public parks will serve the purpose of outdoor recreation. The locations for the proposed public parks in most cases have received required approvals. Specific locations will depend on a variety of factors which influence land acquisition including availability of land and cost. In any event, the locations will be within the park deficient areas as outlined in the City's Recreation Element, and therefore provide these open space areas in suitable locations.

B. AREAS FOR CONSERVATION AND RECREATION

The primary area with the City's Planning Area suitable for conservation and recreation is the Baldwin Hills. At the present time the land area, consisting of approximately 420 acres, is privately owned and used for the purpose of oil extraction. Coexisting with the oil extraction operations are various forms of wildlife, including racoons, weasels, skunks, rabbits (jack and cottontail), ground owls, gopher snakes (and gophers), opossum, and squirrels. Additionally, quail, doves and meadowlarks populate the air. Although these forms of animal life are able to exist with the present use of the area, development of the area for urban uses would force the wildlife to seek refuge in other areas.

Plant materials in the Baldwin Hills include several clumps of mature eucalyptus, ricinus communis (castor bean) and pimpinella (anise) in scattered locations and native ground cover (malacothrix and heterotheca). Although the plant materials do not constitute rare specimens, the extent of the eucalyptus and castor bean groves are such that large sections of the hills are presently usable for outdoor recreation.

Suitability of the land area for private development with urban uses is low due to the presence throughout the area of several branches of the Inglewood-Newport earthquake fault zone. Combined with this limitation on urban development is the subsidence rate within the area which exceeds permissible levels in terms of conventional construction techniques.

The Baldwin Hills area is contained within the City's Conservation Element as an area for conservation for the future. For this reason, the area is included within this section of the Open Space Element for conservation purposes. In addition to conservation, the area, following the conclusion of oil extraction operations, will provide an open space area suitable for outdoor recreation. The recreation activity can coexist with conservation through a careful planning of the Hills to provide a maximum utilization of existing topography and land forms.

During the period of time when the oil extraction operations will continue in the Hills, designation of the area as open space will serve the purpose of promoting the managed production of resources. The remaining quantities of oil are approaching critical stages. Additionally, continued extraction of the remaining oil in the area using modern techniques including water injection (to increase the rate of extraction and decrease the rate of subsidence), will serve to promote the managed production of this resource. Estimates at the present time indicate a remaining 15-year productive life for the underground oil deposits.

Implementation of this open space designation can be accomplished through various techniques including but not limited to proper zoning. Since governmental jurisdiction of the majority of the area rests with the County of Los Angeles, zoning regulations for the area cannot be imposed by the City of Culver City at this time. County plans for the area indicate a land use category which would permit a very low density residential development. County zoning of the area remains agricultural, which is a zoning compatible with the goals of open space.

In addition to adopting adequate zoning regulations which may be imposed on the property upon annexation of the area to Culver City (in the event such an annexation occurs), implementation techniques for the preservation of the Hills as open space include activities to result in acquisition and development of the land area for this purpose by governmental entities or private concerns.

C. PUBLIC LANDS PRESENTLY USED FOR NON-RECREATION PURPOSES
WHICH HAVE POTENTIAL FOR RECREATION USAGE

Within this listing lands are considered public lands if they are owned and/or controlled by public agencies including public utilities. The agencies involved in land areas in this section are: The Metropolitan Water District (MWD), the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps), the Los Angeles County Flood Control District (LACFCD), and the Southern Pacific Railroad Company (Railroad).

MWD Facility

The formal name for this facility, located along the westerly side of Sepulveda Boulevard between Venice Boulevard and the San Diego Freeway on-ramp is the "Venice Pressure Control Structure of the Sepulveda Feeder Distribution System". Consisting of Lots 262-273, 283-290 of Tract 6936 (MB 79-43), the site is owned and operated by the MWD. Most of the structures involved in the facility are located below ground. Along the Sepulveda Boulevard frontage the site is improved with a decorative masonry wall with wrought iron grill work and landscaped recesses. Although considerable surface area exists around certain of the facilities, the technical aspects of the pressure control structure are such that utilization of surface areas immediately above these facilities is unsafe. However, Lots 271, 272, 283, and the northerly 33' of 284 within the site are completely vacant. The land area cannot be considered unused land due to the proximity of the pressure control structure. In terms of configuration (site is approximately 80' x 250'), and the need for areas of outdoor recreation for the community, the four lots involved appear to lend themselves to municipal recreation use. This use of the property could be accomplished without relinquishment of title to the land by MWD. Leases for recreation use similar to the lease for Telbison Park between the Division of Highways and the City have potential in this situation. Finally, the site is located within an area of the City determined by the Recreation Element to be park-deficient. Use of this surface area of this 20,000 square foot site for recreation will not substitute for the total park needs of the area but will provide a beginning within a reasonable economic framework.

Ballona Creek

The Creek, which is operated jointly by the LACFCD and the Corps, and owned by a multitude of private property owners in fragmented parcels, extends for a length of four miles in the City. Within the Creek width are shoulders on each side suitable for improvement as greenbelts and bikeways, and the drainage channel in the center which may in the future be suitable in certain areas for water-oriented recreation. Designation of the entire length and width of the Creek throughout the City as open space will serve a variety of purposes. The Creek at the present time provides a valuable spacial separation within the City. This designation as open space will provide assurances for the future that the separation will remain even if the actual drainage can be conveyed through a series of underground pipes. Open space designation of the shoulders will provide another tool to assist the City in its efforts to develop the shoulders for greenbelt and bikeway purposes. Activities along these lines were begun by the City in 1972 under the Land and Water Conservation Fund Program. As a result of budget considerations and the total number of projects filed that year, the City's initial application was not approved. Since filing for this program is permitted annually, the City is continuing to pursue this implementation method.

Finally, the primary purpose of the Creek is the provision of a major water drainage channel for the western section of Los Angeles County. Provision of adequate drainage is one of the activities which serves to preserve natural resources and promote public health and safety by the prevention of flooding. This purpose will be furthered through the designation of the entire Creek as open space.

Railroad Properties

The Railroad owns several parcels of land which are not being used in conjunction with the operation of a railroad line, as well as strips of land which parallel railroad lines. The City is traversed by three railroad lines: the Inglewood Branch Line (parallel with the westerly side of Centinela Avenue both north and south of the Sepulveda-Centinela intersection), the Santa Monica Branch (within the National Boulevard right-of-way between Venice Boulevard and Jefferson Boulevard), and the Del Rey-Redondo Line (within and parallel to the Culver Boulevard right-of-way from the western City boundary at Culver to the north-eastern City boundary at Culver). Several private spur tracks interconnect with the Santa Monica line. Since in each case the private spur track is located within developed industrial property, and surplus land areas connected to the private spur are non-existent, these private spur lines have not been included as potential areas for future open space.

Within the City the Railroad owns a 20' wide, 800' long strip of surplus right-of-way which is a part of Lot 9 of the Southern Portion of Rancho Rincon de los Bueyes, located parallel with and midway between Schaefer Street and Hayden Avenue. This strip by itself is isolated from public points of access except at National Boulevard. If this strip is combined with other properties in the area, the strip will become part of a buffer system between the industrial Hayden Tract and the residential developments in the Lucerne-Higuera area. Presently the strip is zoned for industrial development. Designation of the strip as open space at this time will preclude its development for industrial purposes. Ultimately, the strip along with adjacent properties to form the buffer will serve the purpose of open space for public health and safety by providing a more livable environment.

Within the City a total of 20,400 lineal feet of active railroad rights-of-way exist. In certain cases the rights-of-way are located within the public streets with public street pavement to within 12.5 feet of the centerline of the track. Unless street designs are altered in these areas, surplus land areas adjoining the tracks is non-existent for open space purposes.

Two sections of Railroad rights-of-way exist in the City with surplus Railroad properties parallel to the "clear zone" for the tracks. These areas are: (1) Along the Del Rey Redondo Line from Culver Boulevard at Sawtelle to Culver Boulevard at Elenda, and (2) along the Inglewood Branch. In each case the surplus areas are presently vacant dirt patches. Improvement of each of these areas with landscape materials will serve as sound buffers between the trains and the adjacent properties. Additionally, the areas abutting the Del Rey Redondo line are of sufficient dimension to permit use as passive park areas. Classification of these areas of surplus railroad property as open space will therefore serve to provide open space for public health and safety as well as some areas for passive park use.

D. VACANT OR UNUSED PUBLIC LANDS

Mc Manus Park Buffer:

The City at the present time owns three lots as well as certain strips of vacant right-of-way along the northerly side of National Boulevard in the Mc Manus Park area. The Lots are: Lot 17 of Tract 3772 (MB 41-91), and Lots 28 and 29 of Tract 5560 (MB 59-19). Lot 17 is developed with asphaltic concrete and used by an adjacent business for overflow parking area. Due to the changing character of businesses in the area the demand for parking has decreased. As a result, the Lot has the potential for use as a passive open space area without adversely impacting the businesses in the area.

Lots 28 and 29, as well as some surplus right-of-way owned in fee by the City (part of Old Hays Street), are presently vacant. Preservation of these properties as open space will serve as a beginning for the total buffer needed between the Mc Manus Park area and the railroad tracks in National Boulevard. Lot 29 is only one lot removed from the edge of Mc Manus Park. Additionally, Lot 28 is only seven lots removed from Lot 17. Preserving these City-owned properties as open space at this time, and improving the lots with screening plants, will provide a beginning for the buffer strip in the area. Remaining properties in the area which are privately owned are presently developed with residential structures. At such time as these properties become available, an acquisition program may be feasible. These lots which will all combine to create a buffer strip will provide an open space area for public health and safety.

Route 90 Freeway Easterly Extension:

Within the Fox Hills area of the City the State Division of Highways owns approximately 40 acres of land intended for the easterly extension of the Route 90 Freeway from its present terminus to its ultimate intersection with the Route 170 Freeway at the vicinity of Slauson Avenue and La Cienega Boulevard. Presently the 40 acres in Culver City remain vacant. Topography is rolling hillside and the vegetation includes a number of mature trees. Based upon information from the Division of Highways, this freeway extension through the 40 acres is not anticipated to commence construction prior to 1980. During the next seven years, therefore, the land area involved remains suitable for recreation uses for the residents of the area. Additionally, preserving this 40 acre site as open space conforms with the intent of Assembly Bill 477, introduced by Assemblyman Brown on February 26, 1973. The proposed legislation, upon adoption, will require that the Division landscape and maintain areas such as the 40 acre site in the event the land area will not be used for freeway purposes within 2 years after acquisition by the Division for that purpose. The legislation at the present time related only to communities with populations in excess of 100,000 persons. As such, the legislation as presently drafted is not directly applicable to Culver City. Implementation of the open space designation on the 40 acres in Culver City may involve proposed amendments to the pending legislation to make the bill applicable to cities of lesser populations within urbanized areas.

E. EXISTING AND PROPOSED PRIVATE RECREATION FACILITIES

Although the Open Space Element's primary objective is the preservation of open space areas for public use, the concept of private open space areas has been used in the City in certain subdivision approvals, and undoubtedly will continue to be used in certain cases in the future. In cases where private open space has been required as a condition of subdivision approval, and has been guaranteed through the filing for recordation of appropriate documents including Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions on the properties involved, these private open space areas provide supplemental recreation facilities for the residents of the subdivisions involved. As such, these areas should be officially recognized as such even though the areas are, and will continue to be, privately owned and maintained. In order to provide within one document a listing of those private open space areas which have been permanently set aside for private recreation, and further assure that the areas will not be changed from private open space areas to private areas for other uses, the following listing has been tabulated.

<u>Development Name</u>	<u>Description of Existing Private Open Space</u>
Beverlywood West	Lot 5 of Tract 24791
Raintree Townhouses	Lot 78 of Tract 23814 Portion of Lot 67 of Tract 23885 Portion of Lot 68 of Tract 29982
Raintree Apartments	Portion of Lot 1 of Tract 23820
Tara Hill	Portion of Lot 81 of Tract 23814
Renaissance at Raintree	Lots 2, 3, 4, 5 of Tract 25417 Lots 2, 4, 5 of Tract 25422

Since in each case the private open space identified for the development presently is guaranteed through recorded CC and R's, further implementation is not required. The open space in each case is intended to remain private in ownership, maintenance, and use.

The City's subdivision regulations permit, with approval of the City Council, the provision of private open space in lieu of public open space (or payment of fee in lieu thereof). Since areas within the City may in the future be subdivided for residential purposes, the potential for additional private open space within the City exists.

One additional area of private open space (in terms of ownership of the land area) exists within the City's planning area. Commonly known as Ron Smith Field, the area is located in the County Island and consists of approximately 10 acres presently used for Little League activities. The existing arrangement between the property owner and the Little League Association permits the League to use the property at a nominal expense. As long as this arrangement remains the recreational use of the property continues. Efforts to retain this arrangement or some other arrangement which will serve to accomplish the purpose of open space for outdoor recreation continue to be pursued by the various persons involved.

F. UNUSABLE PRIVATE LANDS

A limited number of land parcels within the City are, in practical terms, unusable for development with urban uses due to conditions unique to the land areas. Two major development limitations exist for these land areas: (1) earthquake fault zones and (2) lack of availability of public sewers. Each limitation is discussed separately, and in each case land areas which are impacted in terms of development due to these limitations are therefore classified as open space for public health and safety.

Earthquake Fault Zones:

The City of Culver City is located within one mile of the center of the Inglewood-Newport Fault Zone. This fault system contains several active branches which are known and officially mapped. The entire system is classified as an active earthquake fault zone system and as such presents, within close proximity of the fault branches, a practical limitation on the urban development potential of the area. In order to provide for the safety of future residents of the City who might otherwise live in close proximity to the fault branches, the land areas which parallel the mapped branches for a width of 250' on either side of the branches is declared to be open space for public health and safety.

Although outside the City's boundary but within the planning area, the fault zone along with certain other factors has combined to create severe subsidence problems. This condition exists within the Baldwin Hills area in varying degrees of severity. A subsidence condition measurable over time to any degree poses a threat to safe development. Areas where the subsidence rate (based on past measurements and geologic calculations for the next two decades) is or exceeds 0.12 feet per year are areas where development of land for urban uses should be prohibited. These areas therefore are declared to be areas of open space for public health and safety.

Lack of Sewer Availability:

Properties which at the present time lack sewer availability at the property line, but which can be seweraged through the extension of existing public lines, or the provision of pumping facilities, are not totally impacted in terms of development potential. These properties, therefore, need not be declared open space areas as a protection against adverse development practices. Within the City, however, certain properties exist which, in order to be seweraged, require easements from adjoining private property owners, as well as the extension of sewer lines and the provision of pumping facilities. The practical difficulties which private land owners face in attempts to obtain easements for this purpose from other private property owners, combined with the engineering difficulties involved in the sewer line extensions, result in the inability of these properties to develop with urban uses in keeping with modern day development practices. These properties therefore must be reserved as open spaces for public health and safety.

Implementation techniques to preserve for open space those properties which possess development limitations of the types described above include open space zoning and possible acquisition and development for passive open space use.

G. OPEN SPACES FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Land Use Element of the City's Revised General Plan provides for the improvement of the environment of the residential areas of Mc Manus Park and Lucerne-Higuera through the establishment of buffer separations between these areas of the existing industrial developments. Additionally, the Circulation Element of the Plan provides for an increase in the number of raised, landscaped medians within the major public rights-of-way in the City. Each of these proposals is a statement that the amount of open space in landscaped areas in the City needs to be increased.

The Buffers:

Previous listings of open space in this Element have provided that publicly-owned parcels of land which are located within the proposed buffer areas must be reserved as open space at this time to provide the beginnings of the buffers. In conjunction with these reserved lands certain privately owned parcels will have to be utilized in order that the length and width of the buffer strips are adequate to provide the separations needed. In accordance with the Land Use Element these buffer strips may remain in private ownership or may transfer to public ownership. Portions of the buffer strips may constitute setback areas of the properties involved. Exact location of the buffers in each case will depend upon a variety of factors including availability of property. Additionally, implementation of the buffers will be coordinated with the local resident groups in the area as well as the businessmen's association to achieve an equitable solution to the problem of incompatible uses.

Landscaped Medians:

The provision of landscaped medians within the rights-of-way of major public streets is a proposal in the Circulation Element which has been implemented for the past several years. Several street improvements which have recently been authorized have included this provision. The widening and median landscaping in Centinela Avenue is complete. A portion of the Jefferson Boulevard project including the median is complete. Within the next several months the remainder of the Jefferson Boulevard project as well as Overland Avenue will be complete. Additionally, plans in design study for the northern sections of Overland Avenue include landscaped medians. Along with the medians, an increased use of plant materials in traffic intersection islands will provide for an increase in the amount of vegetation in the affected areas. Although classification of the landscaped medians and traffic islands as open space, due to the location of these areas, will not permit utilization of the areas for recreation purposes, the classification will reinforce the City's commitment to increased beautification through landscaping.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION

A. OPEN SPACE ZONING

Culver City's existing zoning regulations permit the operation of land areas for public park purposes in the R-1 (One Family Dwelling) zone and the use of private land for private open space purposes in the R-2 (Two Family Dwelling) zone, the R-3 (Limited Multiple Family Dwelling) zone, the R-4 (Multiple-Family Dwelling) zone and with approval of the City Council in the PD (Planned District) zone. Additionally, other public facilities are permitted in the R-1 zone. The Railroad rights-of-way are zoned T-1 (Transportation). The Creek in certain areas is not zoned at all. This scattering of zoning classifications in which existing or proposed open space areas are permitted and located reinforces the need for open space zoning. Since the City's zoning system does not include any type of "open" zone (such as an agricultural zone), nor any type of flood plain zone, the open space zone to be created, and subsequently applied to specific parcels of land, will be an entirely new zone for the City.

In order for open space zoning to be effectively used as an implementation tool, the zoning category must not only be created and adopted within the appropriate chapter of the Municipal Code, but must also, through duly noticed public hearing procedures, be applied to appropriate parcels of land in the City. Proceeding in proper sequence, the initial step which must be taken is the adoption of an open space zone. The zoning provisions must be drafted to reflect the open space decisions of the City. Adoption of this Open Space Element is the action which will set forth the open space decisions of the City in terms of interim uses of open space areas, private uses of buffer areas, and acquisition for public use of certain additional open space areas. Therefore an appropriate open space zone cannot be drafted to reflect the open space decisions of the City until after those decisions have been made.

B. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS

The Capital Improvement Program for the City, reviewed and adopted annually as a part of the City's budget, is the document which sets forth the priorities for City actions involving the expenditure of money. Coordination of the Program with the General Plan, including the Open Space Element, can be an effective implementation tool for use by the City. Sources of funds for the Capital Improvement Program are many, including the use of revenue sharing funds and the potential use of state and/or federal grant money.

In order for the Capital Improvement Program to be effectively used to implement the various facets of the General Plan, priorities for future actions must be established by the City and must be followed in terms of allocation of funds. Acquisition of land area for open space is the most costly single item required to implement this Element. Throughout this Element two types of possible land acquisitions have been set forth: (1) acquisition of unusable private lands, and (2) acquisition of land areas proposed for future recreation.

1. ACQUISITION OF UNUSABLE PRIVATE LANDS

Unusable private land areas have been determined to be those parcels of land which are impacted by the presence of active earthquake faults and/or by the unavailability of sanitary sewer facilities. In each case the development which might otherwise occur on the land would, due to these existing adverse impacts, not provide for the future users of the land and developments the degree of safety required by modern standards. In order to preserve these unusable land areas for future open space and concurrently prevent the possibility of unsafe developments, the initial priority in terms of land acquisition must be the acquisition of such parcels. In the case of each parcel falling within this category a specific study at the time of application of open space zoning to the parcel must be made to determine the type of open space uses to which the parcel can be put.

2. ACQUISITION OF LAND AREAS PROPOSED FOR FUTURE RECREATION

Prior to acquisition of large land areas for future recreation specific studies in conjunction with open space zoning of these areas must be made to determine the feasibility of acquisition in each case and the timing which would be required. In cases where the land is not within the jurisdiction of the City at the present time the studies must include methods by which the implementation can be accomplished by the City. Additionally, in cases where the financial feasibility of acquisition presents serious timing problems, solutions which would preserve the land area for future acquisition and prohibit certain interim uses must be explored. Following adoption of the Open Space Element these types of studies can begin.

C. INCENTIVES FOR THE PROVISION AND PRESERVATION OF
PRIVATE OPEN SPACES

The increased awareness of the need for open space for the future has resulted in the introduction, during the current legislative session, of several bills to provide economic incentives, on a state-wide basis, for the preservation of open space lands with the retention of private ownership of the lands. This legislation, if adopted, will provide a basis for such incentives. Land assessment procedures are not municipal functions, and as such the City cannot directly provide, through assessment procedures, the financial incentives required. Through use of the open space zone judiciously applied to properties, following duly noticed public hearings, the City can indirectly provide the basis for the financial incentives being created by State law.



SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

The Open Space Element of the Revised General Plan of the City of Culver City and the Environmental Impact Report on the Element were prepared during April, 1973, by Susan Berg, City Planner, under the supervision of William Phelps, Director of the Division of Planning and Community Development, Culver City.

Notice of Completion of the Environmental Impact Report on the Open Space Element was filed with the Resources Agency on April 25, 1973.

Notice of Public Hearing before the Planning Commission on the Open Space Element and Environmental Impact Report was published on April 27, 1973.

Planning Commission public hearing has been scheduled for: May 9, 1973

The Planning Commission, through the adoption of Resolution No. _____ on _____, approved the Open Space Element and Environmental Impact Report relating thereto and recommended to the City Council approval of the Element.

Notice of Public Hearing before the City Council on the Open Space Element was published on : _____

City Council public hearing has been scheduled for : _____

The City Council, through the adoption of Resolution No. CS-_____ on _____, approved and adopted the Open Space Element of the Revised General Plan of the City of Culver City.

On _____, a copy of the adopted Open Space Element and Environmental Impact Report relating thereto was mailed to the Resources Agency.